BUSINESS PLAN 2017–20
Status of Women

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of March 3, 2017.

original signed by

Stephanie McLean, Minister

MINISTRY OVERVIEW

The ministry consists of the Department of Status of Women.

The ministry works collaboratively to advance gender equality in Alberta, leading the Government's work to integrate a gendered lens into policies and programs to improve the lives of women and girls, and thereby strengthen the province as a whole. Status of Women works to advance gender equality in Alberta the following policy areas:

- women's economic security, including child care;
- preventing and addressing gender-based violence; and
- increasing women's leadership and democratic participation.

A more detailed description of Status of Women and its programs and initiatives can be found at www.statusofwomen.alberta.ca.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The outcomes and key strategies identified in this business plan are aligned with the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta.

Advancing gender equality is a critical priority for the Government of Alberta (GoA). Addressing barriers to women's full participation in the economy, ensuring that Alberta's communities are safe and inclusive, embracing fairness and equality of opportunity and outcomes for all Albertans, and maintaining sustainable and accessible social supports require that the lived experience of women and girls in Alberta is considered in government decision-making. Gender equality is intrinsically linked to social and economic growth and is vital to the realization of human rights for all.

Over the last few decades, insistence on 'gender neutral' policies had become common in Alberta and elsewhere. It was viewed as a mechanism for 'treating everyone the same'. However, identical treatment of all people regardless of gender, gender identity, race, socioeconomic status, citizenship, sexuality, and so on, disadvantages certain groups of people (often women and other marginalized groups). Increasingly, governments and other institutions are incorporating a gender and diversity lens into their policy development and decision-making processes. Alberta is currently integrating Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) across government departments as part of a larger gender mainstreaming strategy. Through training and other skill building activities for GoA staff, this strategy will ensure that the capacity of the GoA to develop policies, programs and legislation, including budget processes, will be informed by a gender and intersectional lens.

Women experience barriers to their economic security differently than men. Women in Alberta have lower overall labour force participation than men, and these rates are lower still for Indigenous women. Women's lower labour force participation is due in part to caring for children and other family members. Affordable, accessible childcare continues to be a challenge for many working parents in Alberta, and lone parent households are most often headed by women, amplifying the need for reliable childcare.

Sexual violence has been gaining recognition in the media and by experts in the field as a significant issue in critical need of prioritization (in terms of prevention and intervention). Rates of sexual violence in Alberta have been documented as significantly higher than in other parts of Canada. In addition, Alberta's high rates of intimate partner violence have also not decreased in any meaningful way in the past decade. Across the spectrum of gender-based violence, some populations of women such as (but not limited to) those who are Indigenous, racialized, and new to Canada, experience disproportionately higher rates of violence.

Gender balance in decision-making bodies, whether elected or appointed, is necessary to ensure that organizations fully reflect the diversity of Albertans. To date, women running for public office (municipal, provincial, federal) in Alberta, represented 30 per cent or less of the candidates. As of 2016, women hold 7.2 per cent of corporate boards positions in Alberta. Increasing women's representation in leadership roles in the private sector means strengthening Alberta companies' performance of a global market. A growing body of research demonstrates that bringing together different perspectives, skills and experience improves overall decision-making and financial performance. Within the Government of Alberta, the percentage women who are senior executive managers, and the percentage of women serving on our Agencies, Boards, and Commissions are slowly increasing to nearly 40 per cent. Nonetheless, targeted efforts need to continue to promote this trend towards gender parity in leadership positions. As public service organizations, it is imperative that we truly reflect our province.

OUTCOMES, KEY STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Outcome One: Strengthened capacity of the GoA to advance legislation, policies and programs that promote gender equality

Status of Women will promote the use of a gender-based analysis in all its work with ministries, partners and communities. This will increase understanding of the issues affecting women and girls and be used to support decisions that promote gender equality.

As part of this work the Government of Alberta has adopted Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as tool to assess the gender and diversity implications of policies, programs or initiatives. Status of Women is working with other departments to expand use of the GBA+ tool, ensure access to regular and reliable data, analysis and research regarding women's social, political, economic and legal conditions; strengthen community capacity to help government better understand gendered issues; and explore the use of gender-based analysis in the budgeting process.

Key Strategies:

1.1 Expand GBA+ knowledge and capacity so that it is integrated into the policy cycle across government, and establish GBA+ within other ministries to create accountable communities of practice.

1.2 Create partnerships with the research and analytics communities, internal and external to government, to increase availability of research and data analysis that will enhance understanding of issues facing women and girls in Alberta and create pathways with community organizations for exchanges of context, information, and data on issues affecting diverse groups of women and girls in Alberta.

1.3 Facilitate meaningful connections between government, community, and community organizations to create partnerships and build capacity, promote knowledge sharing, and mentorship among community organizations through a granting program.

1.4 Explore the use of gender analysis in government budgeting, building capacity around gender-based assessment of budgets, and incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process to promote evidence-based decision-making.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2016-17	Target 2017-18	Target 2018-19	Target 2019-20
1.a Percentage of Status of Women community interactions, in the role of enhancing community capacity for action, receiving a high satisfaction rating	90%[1]	90%	90%	90%
1.b Percentage of grant recipients reporting positive outcomes for women and girls as a result of their project	n/a[2]	90%	90%	90%
1.c Number of Government of Alberta staff who attended GBA+ training sessions	1,534[1]	2,500	6,000	6,000
1.d Number of Centres of Responsibility for GBA+ in Government of Alberta	4	8	16	21

Notes:

1 To date as of February 2017.

2 Data will become available in 2017-18.

Linking Performance Measures to Outcomes:

1.a Tracks the satisfaction of stakeholders and community with work facilitated by Status of Women on gender equality issues.

1.b Tracks the positive outcomes resulting from the implementation of programs or projects funded in part or in whole by Status of Women.

1.c Indicates the level of engagement and staff development throughout government to increase competency in applying gender-based analysis in policy and program development.

1.d Tracks the use of gender-based analysis in Government of Alberta departments through Centres of Responsibility established with the support of Status of Women. Status of Women provides ongoing training, expertise and evaluation to Centres of Responsibility.

Performance Indicator	Actual 2016-17
1.a Percentage of publicly released Government of Alberta policy frameworks and strategies that include gender-based analysis	25%[1]

Note:

1 Estimate of 25% based on policy advice provided to other departments. Data will be available in 2017-18.

Outcome Two: Improved position and conditions for women in Alberta in relation to economic security, gender-based violence, leadership and democratic participation

Status of Women provides leadership within government and in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure that gender equality is advanced in Alberta. Evidence-based policy and strategic initiatives led or co-lead by Status of Women improve conditions for women and girls in Alberta by increasing understanding of and addressing systemic and structural barriers to gender equality.

The ministry accomplishes this work by working across government and with partners to create the conditions for women to fully participate in all aspects of life in Alberta. To this end, Status of Women develops strategic relationships with other departments within the Government of Alberta, other levels of government, and community stakeholders to identify shared solutions to improve women's economic security and prosperity, to prevent and address gender-based violence, and increase women's participation in leadership and democratic processes.

Key Strategies:

2.1 Support and promote Government of Alberta policies and programs to increase women's access to labour force participation and women's economic security and prosperity.

2.2 Collaborate with stakeholders across government to develop and implement a diversity and inclusion strategy for the public sector.

2.3 Develop and promote resources to support women's presence, participation, and decision-making in the leadership of private and public organizations.

2.4 Prevent and address gender-based violence through innovative leadership in response to persistent and emerging issues, collaboration with stakeholders and governments at all levels, and influencing decisions and actions of key partners.

2.5 Establish an advisory council to ensure that perspectives from Alberta women and girls are reflected in government policies, programs, and services.

2.6 Work with federal, provincial, and territorial orders of government and UN entities to advance joint work that improves the status of women and girls and report on progress toward women's human rights as stipulated in international conventions.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2016-17	Target 2017-18	Target 2018-19	Target 2019-20
2.a Percentage of ministries working with Status of Women reporting that Status of Women's policy advice met or exceeded requirements	85%[1]	90%	95%	95%
2.b Percentage of ministries working with Status of Women reporting that Status of Women's evidence, analysis and advice was incorporated into policy development	85%[1]	90%	95%	95%
2.c Percentage of ministries working with Status of Women reporting that Status of Women policy advice contributed potential solutions and positively influenced policy outcomes	85%[1]	90%	95%	95%
2.d Number of staff in the Alberta Public Service who attended women in leadership training	720[2]	750	750	750

Notes:

1 Estimates for 2016-17. Data will be available in 2017-18.

2 To date as of February 2017.

Linking Performance Measures to Outcomes:

2.a Tracks the quality of the policy advice provided to government ministries by Status of Women when Status of Women is leading a policy initiative within government, partnering with another ministry, or participating or advising on a policy initiative.

2.b Tracks the integration of gender-based analysis with the guidance of Status of Women into the work of other government ministries when Status of Women is leading a policy initiative within government, partnering with another ministry, or participating or advising on a policy initiative.

2.c Tracks the contributions of Status of Women's policy advice to the quality of policy development and outcomes in other government ministries when Status of Women is leading a policy initiative within government, partnering with another ministry, or participating or advising on a policy initiative.

2.d Tracks the women in leadership training for staff in the Alberta Public Service by Status of Women, which includes both a half-day course and a two-day intensive workshop provided by Status of Women.

Performance Indicators	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)	Actual (Year)
2.a Labour force participation rate in Alberta:					
• All women	67.1%	67.0%	66.2%	66.6%	66.3%
• Aboriginal women	59.4% (2011)	66.0% (2013)	66.7% (2014)	65.6% (2015)	63.4% (2016)
2.b Rate of sexual violence for Albertans 15 years and older (quadrennial survey)[1,2]	33 per 1,000 population (2009)	n/a	25 per 1,000 population (2014)	n/a	n/a
2.c Rate of police-reported intimate partner violence for Alberta women (quadrennial survey)	689 per 100,000 Population (2011)	n/a	623 per 100,000 Population (2014)	n/a	n/a
2.d Percentage of candidates running for office who are women:					
• in Alberta Municipal elections	n/a	26% (2013)	n/a	n/a	n/a
• in Alberta Provincial elections	25% (2012)	n/a	n/a	30% (2015)	n/a
• in Federal elections within Alberta	26% (2011)	n/a	n/a	27% (2015)	n/a
2.e Percentage of board members for Alberta TSX traded companies who are women				9% (2015)	11% (2016)
2.f Percentage of senior executive managers in the Government of Alberta Public Service who are women[3]	34% (2011-12)	36% (2013-14)	38% (2014-15)	39% (2015-16)	n/a
2.g Percentage of those serving on Government of Alberta Agencies, Boards, and Commissions who are women			32% (2014-15)	37% (2015-16)	n/a

Notes:

1 This is based on self-reported data to Statistics Canada. Sexual violence includes being touched in an unwanted sexual manner or being forced to have unwanted sexual activity in past 12 months, Albertans 15 years and older.

2 Available data is not disaggregated by gender. Note that rates of sexual violence are significantly higher for women. Indicator to be used as a proxy until an Alberta-specific annual indicator is developed.

3 Includes all Alberta Public Service staff classified at an Executive Manager 1 and Executive Manager 2 level and all departmental senior officials.

RISKS TO ACHIEVING OUTCOMES

Status of Women is engaged in activities to increase the capacity of government departments to conduct gender-based analysis plus of their policies and programs. It is assumed that increased capacity will lead to increased use of gender-based analysis plus as an approach to analyzing which population groups may be included or unintentionally excluded from the benefits of specific policies and programs. However, without a specific mandate for departments to implement this approach there is a risk that although the knowledge and capacity exists, it will not translate into action.

If Status of Women, with support of other departments and agencies, does not assess the effectiveness of gender-based analysis plus in government departments and agencies, it will be difficult to determine whether government is making progress in fulfilling its mandate with respect to gender equality and advancement. Status of Women is addressing this risk by creating a comprehensive evaluation framework for gender-based analysis.

The work of the ministry is highly interdependent on the work of other stakeholders; much of the work of the ministry is possible or significantly enhanced through collaboration. Status of Women will address with this risk by establishing and maintaining relationships with key ministries and external stakeholders to ensure that gender equality becomes an integral part of policy development in Government of Alberta.

It can be difficult to make direct causal links between policy work and short-term outcomes. Status of Women will address this risk by publishing gender equality indicators and narrative in the Ministry Annual Report detailing the types of policy work in which the ministry was an influencer, linking data trends and outcomes to Government of Alberta initiatives.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)	Comparable					
	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Budget	2016-17 Forecast	**2017-18 Estimate**	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target
EXPENSE						
Ministry Support Services	726	2,981	2,849	**2,890**	2,957	3,021
Gender Equality and Advancement	481	2,280	2,037	**2,180**	2,221	2,263
Gender Policy, Strategy and Innovation	8	2,289	2,289	**2,289**	2,342	2,399
Ministry Total	1,215	7,550	7,175	**7,359**	7,520	7,683
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(2)	-	-	**-**	-	-
Consolidated Total	1,213	7,550	7,175	**7,359**	7,520	7,683
Net Operating Result	(1,213)	(7,550)	(7,175)	**(7,359)**	(7,520)	(7,683)
CAPITAL INVESTMENT						
Ministry Support Services	-	50	50	**50**	50	50
Consolidated Total	-	50	50	**50**	50	50